

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claim 23 is amended to recite that Applicants' claimed method includes a first cleaning step wherein the screen fabric is contacted with a cleaning liquid, without applying suction to the screen fabric, to dissolve or wash out ink residues from the screen fabric and continuing the contacting until the screen fabric is clean of the ink residues, and after the first cleaning step is completed, cleaning liquid remaining on the clean screen fabric is removed by moving a suction nozzle operating under vacuum across the clean screen fabric so that the cleaning liquid remaining on the screen fabric is sucked off and entrained in a gas flow.

Claim 13 is amended to correct a typographical error.

The present amendments are fully supported by Applicants' disclosure and do not add new matter.

Claim 23 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Harpold*. To the extent deemed applicable to the instant claims, such rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Harpold fails to disclose or suggest the instant recited first cleaning step conducted without applying suction to the screen fabric. *Harpold* further fails to disclose or suggest the instant recited removal, after the first cleaning step is completed, of cleaning liquid remaining on the clean screen fabric by moving a suction nozzle across the clean screen fabric to suck off and entrain cleaning liquid remaining on the fabric.

As noted by the Examiner, *Harpold* merely discloses that vacuum pedal 83 can be depressed during the cleaning operation to remove excess solvent from the screen, and that more vacuum can be drawn toward the end of the operation to facilitate final

clean up. It is submitted that *Harpold* clearly fails to disclose the instant recited steps of first cleaning the screen fabric without the use of vacuum until the screen is clean of ink residues and only after the first cleaning step is completed, then using a suction nozzle to remove cleaning liquid from the clean screen.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that *Harpold* neither discloses or suggests Applicants' claimed invention. Applicants have disclosed that their claimed method provides advantages over prior art methods, e.g., mitigations of environmental problems.

Claims 10-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over *Harpold* in view of *Gremminger*. Such rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Gremminger discloses a cleaning apparatus having a cleaning head which includes a discharge nozzle for applying a cleaning material discharged onto a surface being cleaned, and it also includes a suction nozzle for removing dirt and used cleaning material from the surface during cleaning. Like *Harpold*, *Gremminger* does not disclose or suggest applying a cleaning liquid to a screen fabric to clean the fabric of ink residues without applying suction and then applying suction to the clean screen fabric to remove cleaning liquid remaining on the fabric. Thus, *Gremminger* has the same deficiencies as *Harpold*, and the combined teachings of the references would not suggest Applicants' claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art.

As to Applicants' claim 14, both of the cited references disclose an electric motor for driving the suction device, and neither of the references relied upon disclose the use

of a compressed-air driven suction device, which improves safety when using an organic solvent as the cleaning liquid.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the instant claims patentably define Applicants' invention over the prior art relied upon by the Examiner. The Examiner is requested to withdraw such rejections, to allow instant claims 10-23, and to pass this case to issue. If the Examiner is not persuaded by the above, the courtesy of an interview is requested.

If any additional extension of time is required for the entry of this Amendment, such extension is hereby requested and any fee therefore be charged to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

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